

I oppose loosening the rules designed to promote and protect diversity of media ownership. These rules were adopted to ensure that the public would receive a diverse range of viewpoints from the media, and not simply the opinions of a handful of media conglomerates.

To Whom It Concerns,

Please be informed that I strongly support a wider diversification of media ownership, both commercial and non-commercial. I believe it is the responsibility of your Governmental Organization to protect the access we as citizens have to our airwaves.

In my area, the Champlain Valley of Vermont, news and music are primarily provided by a limited number of computer programmed stations playing mp3's and reading national news. The "news" serves as a form of advertisement, gathered by the stations in press releases, primarily commercial and occasionally from the government itself. These releases are rarely to never followed up with analysis or opposing view points. Even when there are clearly alternative views.

Media shapes our culture. Presently the individuals whom have access to our media have strictly commercial goals rather than higher social or spiritual goals and apparently sex and violence sells. Television violence is harmful, as is direct marketing to children, yet this continues to happen at any hour of the day on the majority of stations. In making this last comment I do not wish to imply my child sits through it all, rather TV is not on, nor loud commercial radio when he is awake. Where is the alternative in this free enterprise conglomerated system? Why won't stations air P.S.A's offering healthy alternative views, even views critical of the latest harmful legal addiction. While regulating my child's access is my best option, why is it the only option? A better option would be better more diverse programming. Why not offer airwave easier access (financial, and other) for non-commercial ventures. Typically non-commercial stations missions are community and educationally oriented. The stations I have encountered in other areas of the country, including college radio and national public radio clearly offer the best diversity of views and local news.

I recently moved to this area from Maine where I often listened to a Community Radio Station that frequently played local music, read local news, had local journalists, offered topical shows, including impromptu shows when unusual news occurred. This station had a 50+ mile range and was located in a rural community and not affiliated with National Public Radio.

What is the likelihood a group of non-profit oriented, not wealthy, could start a station in my area if FCC guidelines become more permissive to multi-major media ownership.

Let me offer a more mundane example of how computer radio does not care about its non-advertising content. One of the local ClearChannel stations (I believe there are five) was airing the Super Bowl last winter, (the only station in the area offering the game), one of the teams was local to our region. Precisely at 10:00PM or the last 4 minutes of the game, the news began to simultaneously air while the game was broadcasting. This continued until the game was over. Then only the news remained. I called the station at 10:00 to wake them up but could only leave a message on their voice mail, no comment, apology or otherwise was ever aired. The station continues to claim, they are our New England Patriots channel, including using the final seconds of the game in an advertisement (without the news) proving their point. It is impossible to communicate with a station when a computer is its DJ.

While I appreciate the recent rules providing easier access to Low-Power radio, this format should not be the only alternative to mega radio. Local radio, news, information and comment (as they say) should be heard on all channels and at all frequencies. Stations should be required to have staff that are easily accessed by their community. Radio and Television stations should be required to air more P.S.A's regardless of conflicting advertising opinion, and stations should provide free access to the community to create P.S.A's.

Please consider broadening citizen access over consolidating corporate ownership.